

Wilkins House (Peruvian Embassy)
1700 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D. C.

HABS No. DC-276

HABS
WASH.
218 -

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
WILKINS HOUSE
(PERUVIAN EMBASSY)

HABS No. DC-276

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218-

Location: 1700 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D. C.;
on the southwest corner of Massachusetts Avenue and
17th Street. UTM: 18.322300.4308280.

Present Owner: Republic of Peru

Present Occupant: Republic of Peru

Present Use: Chancery

Statement of
Significance: Originally a private residence, and The Australian Embassy
from 1947-73, this semidetached building, subtly designed in
the 16th-century manner of Italian classicism, is related to
the intersection of 17th Street and Massachusetts Avenue by
an entrance facade set diagonally to the two principal street
elevations. Special attention is drawn to interior details,
such as on the stair, paneling, and doors, which are similar
to those used at 2200 Massachusetts Avenue.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Lot and Square:

The building is located in Square 157, lot 72 (formerly lots 34
through 37 which were subdivided from original lot 1. Original lot
1 was subdivided into lots 23 through 37 in 1859.)

B. Original and Subsequent Owners:

The following chain of title to the property shows the owners of the
present structure and of any known preceding structures on the site:

1873 Deed June 9, 1873, recorded July 2, 1873 in
Liber 721 folio 334

Hallet Kilbourn

To

Timothy Gannon

Lot 37 in Square 158.

1882 Deed March 18, 1882, recorded April 18, 1882 in
Liber 1004 folio 105

John H. Pilling et ux,
Elizabeth C.

To

Timothy Gannon

"...for and in consideration of the sum of twelve hundred and fifty (1250) Dollars, ...Lot...(34) in Spalding and Wilson's subdivision of original lot...(1) in Square ...(158)..."

1885 Deed March 23, 1885, recorded April 3, 1885 in
Liber 1119 folio 115

Michael C. McDonough et ux,
Marcia
To
Timothy Gannon

"...for and in consideration of the sum of Five thousand and two hundred and fifty dollars (\$5250)...Lots...(35) and... (36) in Spalding and Wilson's subdivision of original lot... (1) in square ...(158)..."

1895 Deed June 26, 1895, recorded June 26, 1895 in
Liber 2034 folio 136

Timothy Gannon et ux,
Annie A.
To
Michael Shea

Lot 37 in Square 158

1896 Deed September 16, 1896, recorded September 17, 1896 in
Liber 2151 folio 279

Michael Shea et ux,
Mary C.
To
Timothy Gannon et ux,
Annie A.

Lot 37 in Square 158.

1902 Deed June 5, 1902, recorded June 5, 1902 in
Liber 2659 folio 187

Timothy Gannon et ux,
Annie A.
To
Arthur D. Addison

"...Lots...(34),...(35),...(36), and...(37) in William E. Spalding and John C. Wilson's subdivision of Original lot... (1) in Square...(158)... said subdivision is recorded in the

Office of the Surveyor of the District of Columbia in Book
B, page 182...

Subject to a certain deed of trust recorded among the Land
Records of the District of Columbia in Liber 2490 folio 305
securing an indebtedness of Sixteen thousand dollars. The
payment of which is assumed by said party of the second part..."

1902 Deed December 30, 1902, recorded December 30, 1902 in
Liber 2703 folio 228

Arthur D. Addison et ux,
Caroline H.
To
James B. Oliver

"This Deed,...Witnesseth that Arthur D. Addison and Caroline
H. Addison, his wife of the District of Columbia, parties
hereto of the first part,...James B. Oliver, of Pittsburgh,
Pennsylvania, party hereto of the second part...Subject to an
indebtedness of Sixteen thousand Dollars (\$16,000) secured by
Deed of Trust dated June 18th 1900, and recorded in Liber No.
2490 folio 305..."

Lots 34 through 37, Square 158.

1908 Deed July 2, 1908, recorded July 9, 1908 in
Liber 3157 folio 91

Amelia N. S. Oliver
George T. Oliver
To
Emily J. Wilkins

"This Deed, made...by and between Amelia N. S. Oliver, George
T. Oliver and the Union Trust Company, of Pittsburgh, Pa.
Executors and Trustees, under the last will and Testament of
James B. Oliver, deceased...parties hereto of the first part;
...and Emily J. Wilkins, of the District of Columbia, party
hereto of the second part...Lots...(34) to...(37), both inclu-
sive, in William E. Spalding and John C. Wilson's Subdivi-
sion..."

NOTE: April 10, 1909 Emily J. Wilkins and John F. Wilkins
combined lots 34 to 37, Square 158, into lot 72.
Recorded in Subdivisions Liber 35, folio 113, Office
of the Surveyor, District of Columbia.

Will of Emily J. Wilkins was recorded January 11, 1911
in Will Book No. 70, page 179, Registrar of Wills,
District of Columbia:

"I, Emily Jane Wilkins, of Washington City, District of Columbia...give, devise and bequeath all of my property, both real and personal, and wheresoever situated,...unto my children John F. Wilkins and Robert C. Wilkins,...I give, devise and bequeath to my son, John F. Wilkins, the house known as No. 1700 Massachusetts Avenue, Northwest, in which I now reside, and being at the Southwest corner of 17th Street and Massachusetts Avenue,...in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, and all of the land which I now own in Square...(158)...I also give and bequeath to my said son, John F. Wilkins, all of the household furniture and other articles of personal property which I own and are contained in said house..."

Will of John F. Wilkins, Sr. was recorded January 5, 1942 in Will Book No. 296, page No. 427, Registrar of Wills, District of Columbia:

"...I do give, devise and bequeath all the rest and residue of the estate, real, personal, or mixed...to my wife Julia C. Wilkins, and the American Security and Trust Company, of Washington, D.C.... The said Trustees shall, in the event that I predecease my wife, with her consent, sell my town house at 1700 Massachusetts Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C., and my farm in Montgomery County, Maryland and the proceeds of said sales to become a part of the corpus of this trust fund..."

son: John F. Wilkins, Jr.
daughter: Katherine Wilkins Newbold

1942 Deed March 3, 1942, recorded March 12, 1942 in
Liber 7732 folio 61

American Security and Trust Co. and
Julia C. Wilkins, Trustees
To
The M.R. Corporation

Lot 72 in Emily J. Wilkins' subdivision in Square 158.
"...for and in consideration of the sum of Seventy-Five
Thousand Dollars (\$75,000)..."

1942 Deed July 27, 1942, recorded July 28, 1942 in
Liber 7777 folio 147

The M.R. Corporation
To
Doris C. Lowe

1942 Deed July 27, 1942, recorded July 28, 1942 in
Liber 7777 folio 149

Doris C. Lowe
To
M.R. Corporation
Anna Taetle
Leona B. Gerber

Lot 72 in Square 158 and lots 31, 32, and 33 in William E. Spalding and John C. Wilson's subdivision of part of Square 158. "...Unto the M.R. Corporation ...an undivided one-half interest. Unto Anna Taetle an undivided one-fourth interest. Unto Leona B. Gerber an undivided one-fourth interest..."

1946 Deed December 5, 1946, recorded December 11, 1946 in
Liber 8387 folio 478

The M.R. Corporation
To
Morris Rodman
Gertrude Rodman

Lot 72 in Square 158 and lots 31, 32, and 33 in Square 158. "Unto Morris Rodman an undivided one fourth interest. Unto Gertrude Rodman an undivided one fourth interest." (Note: Rodman was president and Gertrude Rodman was Secretary of the M.R. Corporation.)

1947 Deed January 10, 1947, recorded January 10, 1947 in
Liber 8402 folio 135

Anne Taetle et vir, Max
Leona B. Gerber et vir, Karl
Morris Rodman
Gertrude Rodman
To
His Majesty George VI, in right of the
Commonwealth of Australia

Lot 72 in Square 158.

1973 Deed January 31, 1973, recorded February 23, 1973
Liber 13452 folio 558

The Government of Australia
To
The Republic of Peru

Source: Recorder of Deeds, Washington, D.C.

C. Date of Erection:

The building was begun in the spring of 1909 and completed in June 1910.

D. Building Permits:

The applications for the following building permits were filed by the architect, contractor or owner's agent and provide significant data:

No. 3852, April 16, 1909
Permit to build dwelling
Owner: Emily J. Wilkins
Architect: J. H. de Sibour
Builder: William P. Lipscomb
Estimated cost: \$75,000.

Filed with No. 3852, April 16, 1909
Application for Projection beyond Building Line, February 6, 1909
Owner: Mrs. Beriah Wilkins
"Bay windows", 2'11" x 6'4"
"One on Massachusetts Avenue and one on 17th Street."
("Bay windows" are corners of entrance facade.)

No. 5089, June 29, 1909
Permit for hoisting engine
"Smokestack to be well braced and carried up so as to emit the smoke above neighboring buildings."

No. 766, August 5, 1909
Permit for office or storage shed

No. 292628, February 28, 1947
Permit to Repair or Reconstruct Building
Owner: The Government of the Commonwealth of Australia
"Close-up with solid brick masonry the party wall openings, between this building and 1708 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., now existing on the 1st, 3rd and 4th floors."

Source: Record Group 351, Records of the District of Columbia, Building Permits 1877-1949, Legislative and Natural Resources Branch, Civil Div., National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C.

E. Alterations and Additions:

At the time of our survey in 1971, the reception room on the ground floor, and library and drawing room on the first floor were partitioned for offices. (Purchased by Peru on January 31, 1973, the building is being renovated at the time of this writing.)

The blueprint of the front elevation filed with Permit No. 3852, April 16, 1909 does not indicate a roof balustrade. However, a photograph in a private publication of about 1924, Selections from the Work of J. H. de Sibour, Architect, Washington, D.C., does show a roof balustrade which has since been removed. (See photographs and front elevation drawing.)

F. Architect: J. H. de Sibour, New York and Washington, D.C.

Jules Henri de Sibour (1872-1938), the son of Vicomte Gabriel de Sibour and the former Mary Louisa Johnson of Belfast, Maine, was born in France. "Through his father he was descended from King Louis XVI of France." (The Evening Star, 11-4-38) When a young boy, de Sibour was brought to America where he attended St. Paul's School in New Hampshire and Yale University. In 1898, he married Margaret Marie Clagett, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Clagett, of Washington, D.C. They were to have three sons: Henri Louis, Jacques Blaise, and Jean Raymond.

In 1899, de Sibour went to Paris to study architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. One year later, he returned to the United States and began practice in New York City. He was taken into a partnership in 1902 or 1903 with Bruce Price, noted New York architect. About seven years later, he moved to Washington, D.C.

The following city directories list "Bruce Price & de Sibour" from 1903 through 1909. However, Bruce Price died May 28, 1903, about a year after de Sibour became a partner in the firm. From 1909 through 1911, de Sibour continued the New York practice under his own name and also maintained an office in Washington, D.C.

Trow's New York City
Business Directory

Boyd's City Directory,
District of Columbia

1898-1902 Bruce Price, architect
1133 Broadway

1901-1902 Jules de Sibour, architect
1133 Broadway

1903-1906 Bruce Price & de Sibour
1133 Broadway

1908 Bruce Price & de Sibour
527 5th Avenue

1909-1911 Jules H. de Sibour
527 5th Avenue

1908-1909 Bruce Price & de
Sibour, Hibbs Bldg.

1910-1922 J. H. de Sibour
Hibbs Bldg.

1923-1924 J. H. de Sibour
Edmonds Bldg.

1925-1928 J. H. de Sibour
Investment Bldg.

Jules Henri de Sibour was one of the National Capital's most successful and prolific architects during his 30 years of practice here. His designs in Washington, D.C., include the Wilkins, Hibbs, F. H. Smith, and Investment office buildings; the Chevy Chase Club; the University Club; and the Riggs Theatre and Office Building. He also designed the French Embassy (2221 Kalorama Road, N.W.); the Wilkins Residence (Peruvian Chancery, 1700 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.); the Moore Residence (Canadian Chancery, 1746 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.); and the Stewart Residence (Embassy of Luxembourg, 2200 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.). The most outstanding example of his work surveyed to date is 1746 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.

Sources: Alfred Johnson, History and Genealogy of One Line of Descent from Captain Edward Johnson together with His English Ancestry: 1500-1914, Boston: The Stanhope Press, 1930, p. 126.

Henry F. Withey and Elsie R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased), Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956.

The Evening Star, 11-4-38, 1:3 (obituary).

G. Known Plans, Drawings, Elevations, etc.:

Front Elevation. Blueprint. Scale 1/4" = 1'
Filed with Permit No. 3852, April 16, 1909

"Residence for Mrs. Beriah Wilkins, Washington, D.C.
J. H. de Sibour, Architect
527 Fifth Avenue, New York
February 2, 1909"

(see reproduction)

Plan for projections on Massachusetts Avenue Ink on linen.
Scale 1/8" = 1'

Filed with Permit No. 3852, April 16, 1909

"Residence for Mrs. Beriah Wilkins, Washington, D.C.
J. H. de Sibour, Architect
527 Fifth Avenue, New York
Hibbs Building, Washington, D.C.
January 18, 1909"

H. Important Old Views:

Exterior photograph showing roof balustrade.
Selections from the Work of J. H. de Sibour, Architect, Washington,

D.C., Edward F. Gruver Co., Washington, D.C.: bookbinder,
Private publication: property of Mr. Jay R. L. de Sibour, grandson
of J. H. de Sibour. (see reproduction)

I. Residents:

1. City and telephone directories list the following tenants:

1911-1924 John F. Wilkins
1925-1927 Finnish Legation
1928 Catherine and John F. Wilkins
1929 Vacant
1930 John F. Wilkins
1931 Vacant
1932-1941 John F. Wilkins
1942 Julia C. Wilkins (Jula?)
1943-1946 Australian War Supplies
1947-1969 Australian Embassy - Chancery
1970-1972 Vacant

2. Biographies of the residents:

Beriah Wilkins was born in Union County, Ohio, in 1846 and married in 1870 to Emily J. Robinson, also of Ohio. After serving in the Ohio State Senate, Wilkins was elected to the U.S. Congress in 1883 and subsequently re-elected for two more terms. In Congress, Wilkins was Chairman of the Committee on Banking and Currency. In 1894 he acquired an interest in The Washington Post and in 1899 became its majority share-holder. Wilkins worked as editor and publisher until his death in 1905.

The Will of Beriah Wilkins (recorded June 22, 1905, in Will Book No. 60, page No. 253, Registrar of Wills, District of Columbia) stated: "...my stock in the incorporation known as the Washington Post Co. shall be equally divided between my beloved wife Emily J. Wilkins, and my two sons John F. and Robert C. share and share alike..."

Sources: American Biographical Directories, District of Columbia, 1908-1909, Washington, D.C.: The Potomac Press, 1908.

The New York Times, 2-8-05, 9:7 (obituary).

Mrs. Emily J. Wilkins, widow of Beriah, bought the property for 1700 Massachusetts Avenue in 1908 and applied for a building permit in 1909. She died the year of its completion, leaving the residence and its furnishings to her son John F. Wilkins.

John F. Wilkins, Sr., born in 1872, was the son of Beriah and

Emily J. Wilkins. After his graduation from Princeton in 1894, Wilkins worked on The Washington Post as reporter, "sports editor, assistant city editor, manager of the now defunct Weekly Post, secretary of the Post Publishing Co., and, from 1903 to 1905, as co-publisher of the daily Post with his brother, Robert C. Wilkins." (The Washington Post, 12-16-41) In October 1905 John R. McLean bought the controlling interest of the Post.

Wilkins then involved himself in other business enterprises, becoming president of the Randolph Hotel Co.; president of Potomac Realty Co.; director of National Metropolitan Bank; and a member of the Washington Stock Exchange. During World War I, he was Director of the War Industries Bureau under Bernard Baruch. At the time of his death, he was director of American Security and Trust Co., Washington, D.C.

Socially prominent, Wilkins was the president of the Chevy Chase Club from 1914 to 1918 and member of the Board of Governors of the Metropolitan Club from 1914 to 1919. He died at his Massachusetts Avenue home in 1941, leaving his wife, Julia; son John F. Wilkins, Jr.; and daughter, Catherine Wilkins Newbold.

Sources: The Evening Star, 1-1-42, B9:5.
The New York Times, 12-16-41, 28:2 (obituary).
The Washington Post, 12-16-41, 33:6 (obituary).

Stanley H. Williamson (ed.), Who's Who in the Nation's Capital, 1938-1939, Washington, D.C.: Ransdell Incorporated.

Julia C. Wilkins (1876-1957), the former Julia Crittenden Harris of Richmond, Virginia, married John F. Wilkins, Sr. in 1905 and became "one of the best known hostesses in Washington".

Source: The New York Times, 2-27-57, 27:1 (obituary).

J. Previous Structure on the Site:

City directories and building permits indicate that a grocery store with the address 1700 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. was located on lot 37, Square 158.

Deeds to the property show that Timothy Gannon acquired lot 37 in 1873, lot 34 in 1882, and lots 35 and 36 in 1885. Timothy Gannon, grocer, was listed at 1700 Massachusetts Avenue in both business and residential directories between 1873 and 1899. From 1900 through 1901 only his residence was listed at this address. By 1903 he had moved to 1451 N Street, N.W.

Three building permits show that Gannon maintained a store and residence on the site. Permit No. 1075, dated August 17, 1878, was issued to Timothy Gannon for a brick, private stable measuring 19'-0" by 29'-0" and costing \$400. A permit was issued to the same owner March 30, 1885, to repair the sill of a store. "Two show windows--each projecting 3 feet" were added to the store on lot 37 in November 1893. Although the owner was listed as John A. Hughes, Timothy Gannon was actually the owner according to the deeds.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This semidetached residence, with a mid - 16th century Italianate exterior, has 17th century English interior details. [Floors as in HABS D.C. Catalog.]
2. Condition: The exterior is preserved, the interior partitioned for offices (unoccupied).

B. Exterior Description:

1. Overall dimensions: The four-story-plus-basement structure measures 59'-6" from sidewalk to cornice cap. The three-bay, 39'-2" wide, entrance facade breaks forward diagonally to the three-bay, 43'-0" east elevation (17th Street) and the three-bay, 24'-6" north elevation (Massachusetts Avenue). The building depth from the entrance facade is approximately 56'-0".
2. Foundations: concrete footings and slab.
3. Wall construction: The limestone-faced basement has a torus water table which supports a plain frieze and moulded cap. The horizontally rusticated ground floor is separated from the smoothly dressed second and third floors by a frieze, corona and cyma string course. A cyma string course acts as third-floor window sill. The fourth floor, with alternating windows and incised panels, rests on an omega frieze and cyma string course. The south and west elevations are exposed brick.
4. Structure: brick bearing walls.
5. Mechanical: The building is heated by an oil-burning, hot-air furnace (the manufacturer, unknown). The passenger elevator is by Otis; the lighting is electric.
6. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: The entrance stoop has three limestone risers flanked by block balustrades. The bay above the entrance has a turned-baluster balcony supported by consoles. An areaway gives access to the basement entrance at the rear (southwest) elevation.
7. Chimneys: An exterior brick chimney rises above the south wall; all others are concealed behind the roof balustrade base.
8. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The glazed, double door with transom

and side lights is recessed into a semicircular-arched, limestone architrave with a scroll keystone.

- b. Windows: All windows are double-hung and set within limestone, fascia and cyma architraves. Each second-floor window architrave has consoles supporting a cornice. The central second-floor bay, which opens onto the balcony above the entrance, has consoles and pedimented cornice. The third-floor architraves each have a cornice. The south elevation bays have three-header brick courses forming segmental arches.

9. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: built-up flat roofing.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The Corinthian entablature has a talon architrave, plain frieze, and dentil and modillion cornice, above which is the base for a panelled limestone balustrade with balusters centered over each bay (now removed).
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: none.

C. Interior Description:

- 1. Floor plans: The obtuse-angled plan is formed by the street elevations flanking the diagonal entrance facade which faces the street intersection. On axis with the ground floor vestibule is the central entrance hall and main stair. Immediately upon entering the entrance hall are flanking north and south lounges contained within the triangles formed by the reception room to the northwest and the serving rooms to the south. Each lounge has a lavatory and closet. A trapezoidal antehall gives access from the entrance hall to the northwest reception room. At the southwest is an elevator, and the service rooms and stair.

Over the ground floor entrance hall, and on axis with the main stair, is the first floor central foyer and drawing room. From the foyer, a trapezoidal antehall leads into the north library and a corridor leads to the southeast dining room and the southwest service area. Triangular areas are left between the three main spaces. The triangular areas are designed as an anteroom connecting the drawing room and library, and an antehall and room-with-safe connecting the drawing and dining rooms.
(See plan ,)

Principal bedrooms and baths are on the second floor where a plain staircase over the drawing room continues to the third floor servants' quarters.

2. Spaces:

Entrance hall:

- a. Flooring: carpeted.
- b. Baseboard: 6", wood.
- c. Wainscot: 7'-0" high. There are three rows of flat, oak panels capped by a bracket and cyma cornice and broken by the Tudor arch of the reception room antehall.
- d. Walls: plaster painted white.
- e. Cornice: cyma.
- f. Ceiling: 11'-0" high, plaster painted white; square panels within bound leaf ribs with crossing bosses.
- g. Doorways and doors: The double door to the vestibule is plate glass with cast iron balusters and scrolls. The doors to the lounges, the service area and the elevator are panelled as the wainscot. The reception room antehall is set within a Tudor archway.
- h. Hardware: oval, brass door knobs.
- i. Lighting: There are four, two-light, gilded plaster, baroque sconces.

Lounges:

- a. Flooring: oak, herringbone parquetry (beneath modern linoleum).
- b. Baseboard: 6", wood with cyma cap.
- c. Chairrail: 2'-6" high, wood, fascia.
- d. Walls: The plaster and damask-panelled walls have been painted grey. Below the windows are applied mouldings.
- e. Cornice: cyma and ogee mouldings below a beaded cove.
- f. Ceiling: 10'-0" high, plaster painted white.
- g. Doorways and doors: raised panels; fascia architrave.
- h. Windows: fascia architrave to floor.
- i. Lavatories: hexagonal ceramic tile floor; 6'-0" high square ceramic tile dado; plaster walls and ceiling.

Reception room:

- a. Flooring: oak, herringbone parquetry (beneath modern linoleum).
- b. Baseboard: 7", wood with cyma cap.
- c. Walls: The papered, plaster walls are painted over. There are applied, gilded mouldings.
- d. Ceiling: 11'-0" high, plaster painted white. Bisecting circles form quatrefoil with bosses and rosettes in the late Tudor manner.
- e. Doorways and doors: doors removed.
- f. Lighting: There are three, two-light, brass and black enamel, Georgian revival sconces.
- g. Heating: The north wall chimney has a black marble hearth. The plaster and wood mantel, in the Georgian manner, has flanking panels of leaves and fruit below consoles supporting a sunburst mask frieze, and an egg and dart shelf.

Main stair:

The reverse turn stair ascends west thirteen risers to the mid-landing and east thirteen risers to the second floor. The closed stringer soffit is plaster painted white, having square panels within bound leaf ribs with crossing bosses. The stringer, treads, risers and balustrade are oak. The candelabra-panelled newel is buttressed by a scrolled console, and the balustrade is pierced by panels of carved dolphins, nuts, fruit and flowers. A tripartite window and a gilded wood, baroque chandelier light the stair well. (See photographs.)

Foyer: (See photographs.)

- a. Flooring: carpeted.
- b. Baseboard: 6", wood.
- c. Wainscot: 8'-6" high. There are five rows of flat, oak panels below a bracket and cyma cornice. The wainscot is recessed for the drawing room door and continued into the library antehall.
- d. Walls: plaster painted white. There are four-centered archways to the library antehall and the south corridor. A plaster-panelled, four-centered arch caps the recessed drawing room door.
- e. Cornice: cyma.

- f. Ceiling: 13'-0" high, plaster painted white; square panels within bound leaf ribs with crossing bosses.
- g. Doorways and doors: The double doors to the drawing room and library are of wainscot height. Each leaf has raised panels with a central acanthus leaf diamond panel. The wainscot cornice is continued over the doors.
- h. Hardware: decorative, oval, brass door knobs.
- i. Lighting: There are two, three-light, acanthus leaf, gilded plaster, baroque sconces.

Drawing room: (partitioned for offices. See photographs.)

- a. Flooring: walnut, herringbone parquetry.
- b. Baseboard: 6", wood painted black with bead cap.
- c. Dado: raised wood panels in cyma mouldings.
- d. Chairrail: 2'-6" high, wood with bead, plain frieze and fascia between cyma.
- e. Walls: Flat plaster panels in applied cyma and fascia mouldings.
- f. Cornice: plaster and wood with talon, fascia, egg and dart, acanthus modillions, talon and cyma below a cove.
- g. Ceiling: 13'-0" high, plaster painted white. The cove is bordered by oak leaf pulvination followed by three, concentric, decorative mouldings which surround a pulvinated central oval.
- h. Doorways and doors: There are 8'-0" high double doors to the foyer, library, and flanking the south chimney, to the anterooms and dining room. The doors have cornucopia lock-rails between raised panels within egg and dart mouldings, and fascia and ogee architraves.
- i. Hardware: decorative, oval, brass door knobs.
- j. Heating: The south wall chimney has a marble hearth with panel inlays, and a cast iron firebox and surround in the lattice motif. The white marble mantel, 4'-0" high, has floral pendant consoles, with corner rosette side panels, and a rosette guilloche frieze broken back over either console and centered by a floral swag key. The overmantel panel, its brocade painted over, has an egg and dart moulding with a feather and flower cap which interrupts the room cornice.

Library: (oak-panelled. Jacobean manner. See photographs.)

- a. Flooring: walnut, herringbone parquetry.
- b. Walls: There are six rows of stylized linenfold panels. Flanking the north wall chimney are pairs of bookshelves over cabinets, separated by decorative panelled pedestals and fluted pilasters, with rosette, and egg-and-dart capitals.
- c. Cornice: denticulated.
- d. Ceiling: 13'-0" high, plaster painted white. Leaf and rosette mouldings, which form repetitive Greek cross quatrefoil, are connected to square and diamond panels.
- e. Doorways and doors: The 8'-0" high, double doors to the hall and anteroom each have two rows of acanthus leaf diamond panels within concentric rectangles.
- f. Hardware: decorative, oval, brass door knobs.
- g. Lighting: There are seven, three-light, brass sconces with strap work scroll bases.
- h. Heating: The north wall chimney hearth is marble and the firebox is closed. The purple, grey and white-veined marble mantel, 6'-0" high, has a fascia and bolection surround, a plain frieze with scroll terminals and a cyma reversa, corona and cyma shelf. (See photograph.)

Dining room: (oak-panelled. Jacobean manner. See photographs.)

- a. Flooring: walnut, basket weave parquetry.
- b. Baseboard: 4", with bead cap.
- c. Walls: Between fluted composite pilasters on panelled pedestals are four rows of paired, diamond-within-square, panels. The pilasters also flank the south chimney, and the windows and double door.
- d. Cornice: The full entablature has a fascia and bead architrave, a strap work frieze interrupted by acanthus consoles over each pilaster, and a cyma cornice.
- e. Ceiling: 13'-0" high, plaster painted white. The slightly coved ceiling has hexagonal and octagonal panels.
- f. Doorways and doors: The north wall double door to the ante-hall (and drawing room) has raised panels (centered by an acanthus leaf diamond panel) and a cyma architrave. Flanking the double door are single doors with raised panels, one to the corridor and the other to the room-with-safe.
- g. Hardware: decorative, oval, brass door knobs.

- h. Lighting: Four, 3-light, escutcheon and arm, brass sconces.
- i. Heating: The south wall chimney hearth is stone and the firebox is herringbone brick. The grey limestone mantel (6'-0" wide by 7'-0" high) has guilloche-panelled pilasters with egg and dart capitals which support guilloche consoles that flank a plain frieze. The consoles support a bead, fascia and talon architrave, a ribbon frieze, centered by an escutcheon and broken forward over either console, and a talon, corona, bead, and cyma shelf. (See photographs.)

D. Site:

1. Setting and orientation: The building faces northeast across the intersection of 17th Street and Massachusetts Avenue on a lot measuring 56'-8" on the north (Massachusetts Avenue), 68'-6" on the east (17th Street), 75'-5" on the south (public alley), 27'-4" on the southwest and 55'-3" on the northwest.
2. Enclosures: none.
3. Outbuildings: none.
4. Walks: At the south is a brick-paved alley; a curved concrete entrance drive connects Massachusetts Avenue and 17th Street.
5. Landscaping: The oval section formed by the drive and the areas abutting the east and west building walls are planted with oak, silver beech, blue spruce, hemlock and Virginia creeper.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This document, made from records donated December 1973 to the Historic American Buildings Survey by the Commission of Fine Arts, represents studies of prime, typical, diversified and sumptuous architecture erected primarily between the years 1890 and 1930, when American society and architecture were greatly influenced by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. These studies, organized originally to be adapted to HABS format, were first published in 1973 as Massachusetts Avenue Architecture, Vol. 1, issued by the Commission of Fine Arts, 708 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D. C., Charles H. Atherton, Secretary; Donald B. Myer, Asst. Secretary; Jeffrey R. Carson, Architectural Historian; Lynda L. Smith, Historian; and J. L. Sibley Jennings, Jr., Architect. Photographs were made for the Commission by Jack E. Boucher, Linwood, New Jersey; J. Alexander, Wheaton, Maryland; and the Commission of Fine Arts Staff. Donated material was coordinated for HABS documentation in 1978 by Lucy Pope Wheeler, HABS Writer/Editor.

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